BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

BC Stats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 09-47 November 27, 2009

- **BC's median age reaches 40.7 years**
- **Retail sales rise 1.8% in September**
- **Revenues rise 1.2% for the food service and drinking places industry**

Population

- **BC's population continues to get older, with the median age reaching 40.7 years as of July 1, 2009.** This represents a 1.3 year increase since 2004 and a 12.9 year increase since 1971. BC is currently the oldest of the western provinces, where median ages range from 35.6 in Alberta to 40.7 in BC.

  Seniors (those aged 65 and over) account for 15% of BC's population, up from 14% in 2004. Among the western provinces, only in Saskatchewan do seniors constitute a similar proportion of the population. Those aged 18 to 64 comprise two-thirds of BC's population, and 0 to 17 year olds make up the remainder (19%). By 2036, BC Stats' current projection expects this age group to make up less than 17% of the population.

  Nationally, the median age of the population was 39.5, with seniors accounting for about 14% of the total population.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

The Economy

- **Retail sales in British Columbia rose 1.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) to $4.6 billion in September.** Revenues for most trade groups increased with the largest expansion in the automotive (+4.4%) sector, particularly among gasoline stations which saw sales leap 8.2%. Other major contributors to the rise in retail trade were general merchandisers (+2.4%) and food retailers (+1.3%). Dropping quickly between October and December 2008, retail sales in BC have re-established an upward trend, increasing in six of the past nine months.

  Nationally, retail activity was up 1.0% to $34.9 billion in September, largely due to a 2.0% increase in sales within the automotive sector. Quebec registered the largest monthly increase (+2.2%) while Saskatchewan was the only province to show a slowdown in sales (-0.9%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

- **Sales at British Columbia's food services and drinking places rose 1.2% (*seasonally adjusted*) to $668 million in September.** Revenues at drinking places registered the first monthly decline since March and the largest since December 2008. However, that slowdown was offset by gains made at restaurants and other food services establishments.

  Nationally, the industry saw sales increase 0.8% to $4.1 billion with only Nova Scotia (-0.6%) and Manitoba (-0.4%) recording lower revenues. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

- **Compared to the same month last year, British Columbia's total lumber production was down 14.3% in September.** While output at Interior mills was off 13.2%, the production slowdown at Coastal mills was even deeper (-22.1%). On a year-to-date basis, lumber production in BC has fallen by nearly one-quarter. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The number of people receiving regular Employment Insurance benefits in BC increased 12.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) in September.** This increase in beneficiaries comes

Report

Most Economic Indicators Remain Weak in Second Quarter

Did you know...

In 2008, nearly 20% of all US imported oil came from Canada. That's more than any other country in the world including both Mexico (10%) and even Saudi Arabia (12%)!

Data Source: US Energy Information Administration

as a sharp turnaround from declines registered in each of the two previous months. Since September 2008, the number of people collecting regular benefits in BC has more than doubled (+130.7%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Energy Consumption

- **Canada's energy consumption slowed 2.1% in 2008, the result of lower demand from the industrial (-5.9%) and transportation sectors (-3.5%).** Overall, Canadians used 7,793 petajoules of energy in 2008. By comparison, British Columbians consumed 1,544 petajoules, roughly one-fifth of all energy consumed in the country. To put these figures into perspective, 30 litres of gasoline contains roughly one gigajoule of energy and a petajoule is the equivalent of one million gigajoules. In terms of supply, Canada produced 16,660 petajoules of energy from all sources in 2008. *Data Source: SC Cat. no. 57-003-X*

Labour

- **In 2008, job stability in Canada's manufacturing sector reached its lowest point since the recession of 1991/1992 and the second lowest point in more than three decades.** In the economy as a whole, 56% of employees held onto their jobs during the four years between 2004 and 2008. However, in manufacturing, that proportion dropped to just 48%. This drop in four-year retention rates was observed among all workers regardless of tenure. For example, those with little tenure (two or fewer years) saw retention rates fall 22%. Those with a great deal more tenure (twenty or more years) had retention rates drop 23%.

  In 2008, the average expected length of unemployment for manufacturing workers was 10.9 weeks, significantly longer than the 9.7 weeks in non-manufacturing sectors. Not only do workers in the manufacturing sector have to contend with declining job stability, but they are also likely to be unemployed for longer periods. *Data Source: SC Cat. no. 75-001-X*

- **In terms of quality of employment, there was a sharp divide between immigrant and Canadian-born workers in 2008.** On average, immigrants worked a slightly longer workweek (38.3 hours) than those who were born in Canada (38.1 hours). Immigrants also reported a higher rate of involuntary part-time employment (38%) than their Canadian-born counterparts (30%).

  The proportion of employees that reported being in temporary positions was higher (10%) among immigrants than those born in Canada (8%) and that gap was roughly twice as wide among those who had arrived within the past five years (16%). That said, the prevalence of temporary employment was lower (7%) for those who immigrated more than 10 years earlier.

  The average hourly wage for an immigrant aged 25 to 54 years was $21.44, compared with the $23.72 earned by Canadian-born workers of the same age, a difference of $2.28. This gap more than doubled among immigrants that had come to Canada within the last five years ($5.04). Immigrants with university degree fared no better, earning about $5 dollars an hour less than similarly educated Canadians.

Data Source: SC Cat. no. 71-606-X2009001

The Nation

- **The nation's current account *(seasonally adjusted)* remained in deficit for a fourth consecutive quarter, widening to a record $13.1 billion.** This deficit was largely attributable to the expanding trade deficit in the trade of goods. While goods exports were up $2.4 billion (+2.7%), imports of goods rose $4.8 billion (+5.3%).

Data Source: SC Cat. no. 67-001-X

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November 27, 2009

For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Infoline Report

Contact: Lillian Hallin
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originally published in
Business Indicators Issue 09-09

Most Economic Indicators Remain Weak in Second Quarter

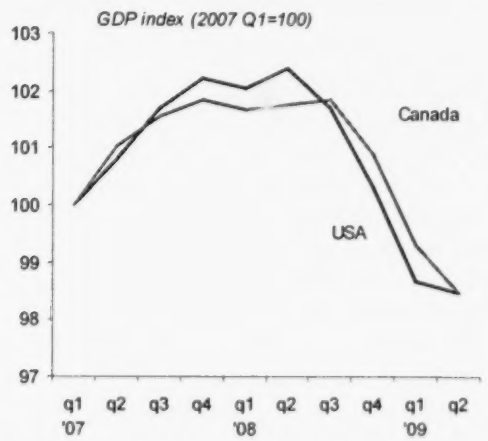
Second quarter in review...

Although some economic indicators (primarily related to consumer spending) are starting to improve, most key economic data suggest that British Columbia's economy remained in a slump in the second quarter.

Putting the recession into perspective

During the early stages of the current downturn in the global economy, there was widespread speculation that economies in North America and other parts of the world could slip into a depression rivalling the Great Depression of the 1930s. Those fears have eased in recent months as economies have proven to be more robust than anticipated. Some are starting to show signs that they may be climbing out of the recessionary trough.

Canadian and US economies in recession



Data Source: Statistics Canada

There is no doubt that the current recession is both broad and deep, but how does it compare to previous downturns? Since the fourth quarter of 2007, before the current downturn began, the US economy has shrunk 3.7% (by comparison, the biggest decline in US GDP during the recession of the early 1980s was 2.3%). In Canada, the downturn started later (in the third quarter of 2008), but the Canadian economy has shrunk nearly as much (-3.3%) from its pre-recession level.

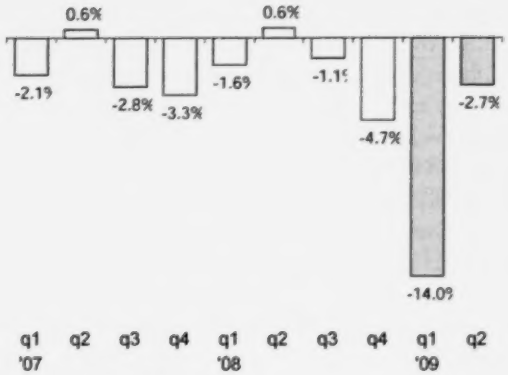
BC's economy continues to show signs of weakness

Although there is no current quarterly GDP data available for BC, it is likely that the downturn in this province is at least as severe as in the country as a whole. BC's economy shrank 0.3% in 2008, more than in any other province except Ontario (-0.4%).

Recessionary conditions continued to hold the BC economy in check during the second quarter. Manufacturing shipments tumbled, as BC's wood and paper industries remained in a free-fall. Total shipments by durable goods producers shrank 3.0% while the value of sales by producers of non-durable goods was down 2.4%. In the forest sector, the volume of timber scaled and pulp and paper products shipped by BC producers both continued to decline. However, wholesale sales increased slightly in the second quarter.

Manufacturing sector remains weak

Manufacturing shipments
(Quarterly % change, seasonally adjusted)

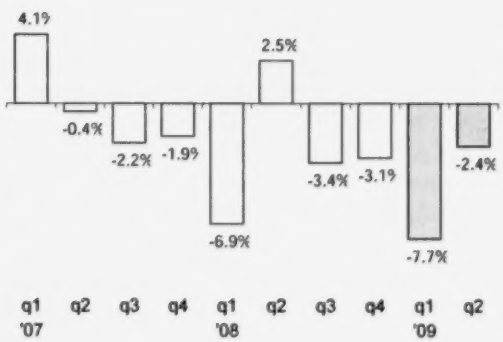


Data Source: Statistics Canada

BC exporters of goods and services also did not fare well. Total international exports were down significantly, marking a fourth straight quarterly decline, and the eighth in the last nine months. Exports to other provinces remained in a slump, and imports continued to decline as business demand for imported goods and services continued to slow.

International exports continue to slump

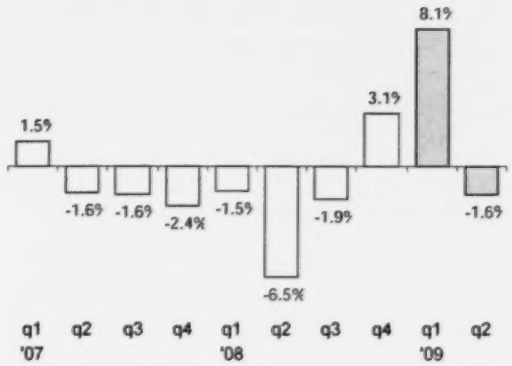
International exports of goods and services
(Quarterly % change, $2002, seasonally adjusted)



Data Source: BC Stats

Investment in non-residential buildings slips back into negative territory

Investment in non-residential buildings
(Quarterly % change, $2002, seasonally adjusted)



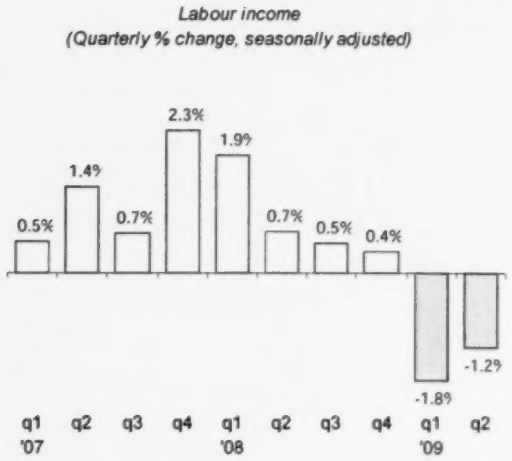
Data Source: Statistics Canada

A brief, but significant, upturn in investment in non-residential buildings ended in the second quarter, as spending fell back after soaring at the beginning of the year.

Investment in new housing and consumer expenditures recover despite drop in labour income

With fewer people working, and tight labour market conditions easing, labour income in the province fell (-1.2%) in the second quarter. BC, Alberta and Ontario were the only provinces to post a significant decline in labour income during this period. Wages, salaries and benefits of BC workers have fallen more than in any other province since the beginning of the year, shrinking 1.2%, nearly double the 0.7% decline in Ontario during the first six months of 2009.

Labour income down again in the second quarter



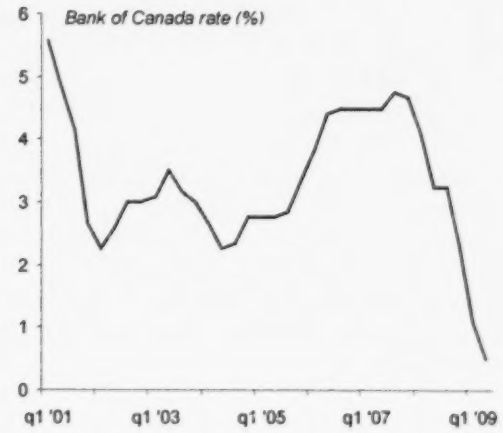
Data Source: Statistics Canada

Stock markets rally but stock price indices remain well below pre-recession levels

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Stock markets rallied, providing some welcome relief for investors, but with interest rates remaining at near-record lows, total income from investments was down in the second quarter.

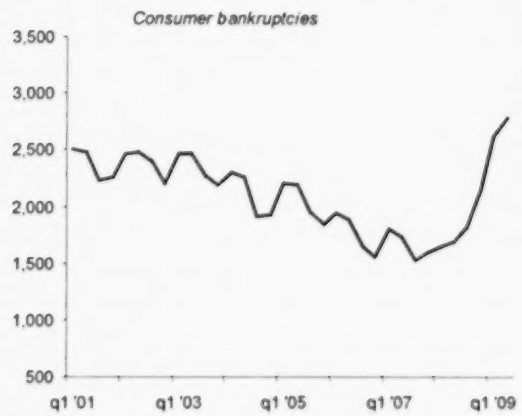
Interest rates at near-record lows



Data Source: Statistics Canada

An increase in government transfers was not enough to offset the decline in labour and investment income and personal income inched down. Consumer bankruptcies mounted, as a growing number of individuals who were unable to meet their financial obligations filed bankruptcy papers, and bankruptcies rose to their highest level in at least two decades.

Consumer bankruptcies continue to climb

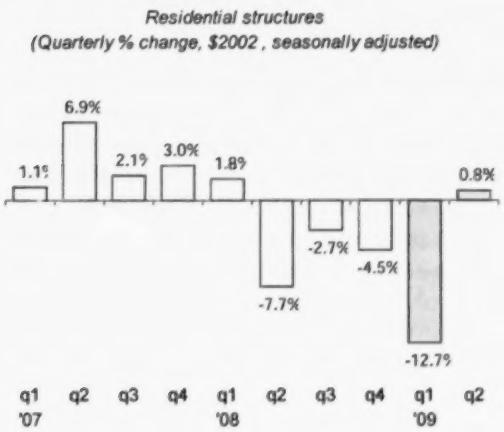


Data Source: Statistics Canada

The downturn in the housing market persisted, and the cost of resale housing declined for a fourth straight quarter. Housing starts in the province were at their lowest quarterly level since late 1984 as builders continued to hold back on new housing projects.

Despite this, a year-long downturn in new investment in residential structures came to an end, as total investment in new housing, renovations, and resale activities increased for the first time since the beginning of 2008. However, investment in non-residential building projects remained soft.

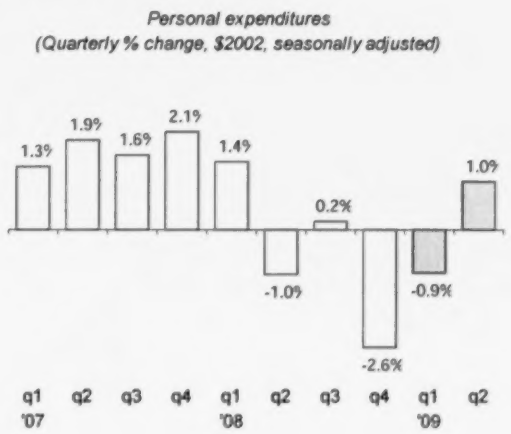
Investment in residential structures increases for first time since early 2008...



Data Source: BC Stats (preliminary estimates)

Consumer spending on goods and services also picked up speed in the second quarter, increasing 1.0% after declining during most of the last year. Sales of motor vehicles rose in the second quarter, and consumer spending on services posted the strongest gain (+1.5%) since late 2007.

...and consumer spending rises

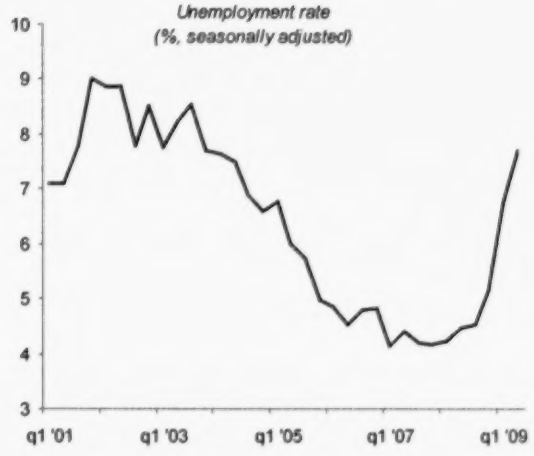


Data Source: BC Stats (preliminary estimates)

Slight improvement in labour market conditions

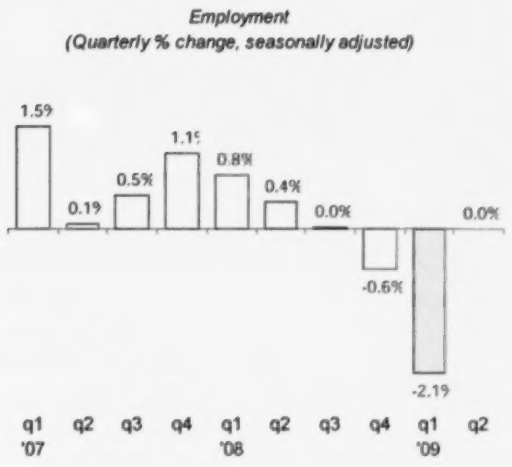
The province's jobless rate climbed back to levels not seen since 2003. However, employment was stable, after back-to-back declines in the number of people with jobs.

Unemployment rate continues to climb...



Data Source: Statistics Canada

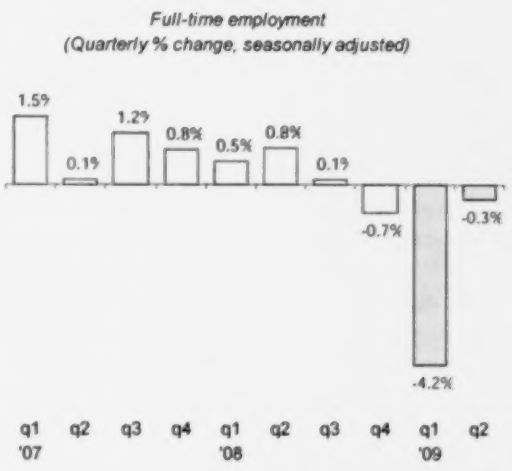
...and employment stabilizes in second quarter



Data Source: Statistics Canada

However, the number of people with full-time employment continued to fall, declining for a third straight quarter. An increase in full-time work is usually a good indicator that employers are becoming more confident about the future, and are beginning to make more intensive use of labour as they ramp up production. However, an ongoing decline in full-time employment suggests that improvements in the province's labour market are still tentative.

Full-time employment still declining



Data Source: Statistics Canada

Despite improvements in some economic indicators, taken together, these indicators suggest that British Columbia remained in a recession during the second quarter. National and provincial indicators continue to be very volatile, so whether or not the third quarter results will suggest an improvement in British Columbia's economic situation remains to be seen.

Statistics Canada's Survey Skills Workshops

Call for our workshop calendar!

Understanding and Interpreting Data

This is a practical statistical course that covers the basic aspects of survey data analysis. This course will appeal to novice analysts and those who are required to interpret statistical findings. It provides an overview of basic types of research as well as analytical requirements. This is followed by a short treatment of survey sampling and types of data.

Some of the analytical techniques that will be covered include cross tabulations, chi-square and some aspects of linear regression. The workshop includes a hands on data analysis exercise and a discussion on the principles for presenting results.

VANCOUVER

December 15-16, 2009
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Statistics Canada Boardroom
Suite 600-300 West Georgia St.
Vancouver, BC

Register early as space is limited

Fee is $550 + GST

Early registration: $499 + GST (at least 3 weeks prior)

Workshop Topics include:

- Analytical requirements and sources of data
- Survey design and sampling methods
- Types of Data
- Confidence intervals
- Grouping and graphic data
- Analytical techniques
- Interpreting and presenting analytical results

Learn from the Survey Experts!!

F.T.

REGISTRATION

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

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E-mail: _____

Visa__ M/C__ Amex__ Cheque__ Amount $ (incl. GST):_____

Card No: _____

Cardholder: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Signature: _____

Fed. Gov. Dept#: _____ Org#: _____ Ref#: _____

To register, please return form to:

Workshop Registrar
Statistics Canada
600-300 West Georgia Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 6C7
Tel: Toll Free (888)-799-0050 or 604-666-1851
Fax: Toll Free (877) 287-4369 or 604-666-6680
West.info@statcan.gc.ca

Please make Cheque and Money Orders payable to '**Receiver General for Canada**'

Refund Policy—Registrations are guaranteed once payment is received. Fees will be refunded, less $75 administration charge, if written notice is received at least 3 business days prior to the workshop. Substitutions are permitted at any time.

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Canada

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Issue 09–47

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also on the Internet at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca or choose RSS

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jul1/2009	% change on one year ago
BC	4,455.2	1.6
Canada	33,739.9	1.2
GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 9)		
(BC - at market prices)	2008	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	197,931	3.3
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	164,520	0.0
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)*	37,529	-1.7
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	25,931	3.2
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Sep	2,721	2.1
Merchandise Exports - Sep	1,896	-2.8
Retail Sales - Sep	4,559	1.8
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on one year ago	12-month avg % change
(all items - Oct 2009)		
BC	-0.6	0.2
Vancouver	-0.6	0.3
Victoria	-0.5	0.3
Canada	0.1	0.4
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on prev. month
(seasonally adjusted)	Oct '09	
Labour Force - BC	2,461	0.3
Employed - BC	2,257	-0.6
Unemployed - BC	204	11.4
		Sep '09
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	8.3	7.4
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	8.6	8.4
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Nov 25/2009	Nov 26/2008
Prime Business Rate	2.25	4.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.60	6.35
- 5 year	5.59	7.20
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Nov 25/2009	Nov 26/2008
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0501	1.2342
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9565	0.8129
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on one year ago
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Oct '09	
BC	808.81	1.7
Canada	815.58	2.7

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Population Highlights - NEW

Population Highlights is a new BC Stats periodical that replaces both Migration Highlights and Immigration Highlights. This release provides detailed current information on population flows between British Columbia and other provinces/territories and the rest of the world, as well as other components of population change. Also, a feature article provides additional analysis on a topic of interest related to migration or immigration issues.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/pubs/pr_pop.asp

Small Business Profile 2009

The 2009 Edition of the annual profile of small business in British Columbia is now available. The report provides information on British Columbia's small businesses, including number of businesses, employment and small business' contribution to the provincial economy.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/sm_bus.asp#sbp

Population & Household Projections

The latest British Columbia population projections (PEOPLE 34) are now available. BC Stats produces population and household projections for British Columbia and for a number of sub-provincial geographies in the province, including: Development Regions, Regional Districts, Health Authorities, Health Service Delivery Areas, Local Health Areas, College Regions, School Districts, and six Special Regions.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/popproj.asp

Released this week by BC Stats

- Current Statistics, November 2009

Next week

- Business Indicators, November 2009
- Quarterly Regional Statistics, 3rd Quarter 2009
- Tourism Sector Monitor, November 2009
- Labour Force Statistics, November 2009
- Earnings & Employment Trends, Nov. 2009

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